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STRUCTURE OF THE DRAFT PLATFORM FOR ACTION

Statement submitted by the National Council of German Women's Organizations - Federal Union of Women's Organizations and Women's Groups of German Associations E.V., a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, category II

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 29 and 30 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 23 May 1968.

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The National Council of German Women's Organizations, the umbrella organization for 50 different women's organizations in Germany, representing 11 million women, in view of its continuous work for the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, makes the following proposals to the Platform for Action:

A. To strengthen factors that promote the full participation of women in power structures at all levels of society and to eliminate factors that prevent it:

1. Women should become visible everywhere.

2. Women should try new forms of political dialogue and political influence.

3. Politicians should see women as equal partners in politics.

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* E/CN.6/WG/1994/1.

4. Women should see themselves as equal partners in the political development process.

5. Create laws to promote the advancement of women in the decision-making process, until the percentage of women in the higher grades is equivalent to that of all women in the field. This concerns the civil service, courts of justice, and universities, as well as industries and the private economy.

6. Governments should support campaigns:

(a) To encourage women to engage in political work by becoming members of political parties;

(b) To urge political parties to nominate women candidates for parliaments at all levels according to the proportion of women in the country, at least according to the proportion of female party members.

7. Enhance participation of women in the United Nations system, inter alia, in the human rights treaties bodies and commissions.

B. To eliminate the factors that accentuate poverty among women and prevent them from overcoming the circumstances that keep them in that situation:

1. Eliminate persistent dependency of women, which can lead to extreme poverty. Objectives preventing dependency:

(a) Employment for all women;

(b) Part-time workers should work sufficient time in order to obtain protection through the system of old-age pension and unemployment benefits;

(c) Rewarding individuals for their unpaid work through the social insurance system by treating the time of unpaid work like regular working time.

2. Re-evaluate unpaid activities such as looking after children, and caring for the elderly and the handicapped by:

(a) Assessing the skill requirements of such activities;

(b) Transferring these skills to market activities;

(c) Re-evaluating the social and economic value of such activities.

C. To strengthen factors that ensure women's equitable access to education, health, employment and other means of maximizing the use of their capacities:

I. Education

1. Provide qualified initial training for women and men.

2. Innovative education should concentrate on:

(a) Widening girls' employment horizon;

(b) Preparing boys for their future responsibilities as parents.

3. Encourage women and girls to choose professions for which technical skills are required.

4. Provide vocational training and occasional jobs during the time of family leave.

5. Train in women's skills after their leave from the labour market or provide retraining facilities.

6. Give public commissions and state subsidies preferably to those enterprises and companies that provide qualified training for girls and women.

II. Health

1. Provide measures to ameliorate the situation in hospitals and nursing homes.

2. Develop social security systems for the care of those persons who need constant nursing care, which hospitals do not provide.

3. Inform women explicitly about the danger of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) in order to prevent multiplication of this epidemic.

4. Provide decent nursing places for persons suffering from AIDS.

5. Create instruments to integrate disabled women, inter alia, through:

(a) Competent counselling offices in sufficient quantities which can be reached by the women concerned. Qualified staff should be able to respond to psychological problems and gender-specific problems;

(b) Creating and improving self-help groups;

(c) Creating and improving leisure-time activities;

(d) Creating innovative job facilities.

6. Create the same measures as laid down in proposal No. 5 for constantly ill women.

7. Provide access to public facilities, social security and health services and other services that are necessary to ensure women's active participation in all aspects of society.

III. Employment

1. Ensure that equality policies are an integral part of economic policies.

2. Eliminate gender segregation as the main cause of gender inequalities:

(a) Redress characterization of female-dominated jobs as having low status, low income and less potential for training and promotion;

(b) Upgrade the traditionally female-dominated professions to attract male applicants and thereby avoid gender segregation of jobs.

3. Broaden the range of occupational options for women and promote by this their equality as well as their efficiency with respect to the labour market.

4. Develop structural policies that take into account the different life structures of women which might differ from region to region.

5. Regard employment of women as an integral part of the policy promoting economy and employment, for example:

(a) Give public commissions preferably to companies and enterprises that can prove promotion of women;

(b) Connect state subsidies strictly to women-promoting measures such as qualified jobs for women, industrial jobs for women, technical jobs for women and male-dominated jobs for women.

6. Keep and promote women's willingness to work.

7. Attract public attention to industries with a high percentage of female workers and give financial means for structural improvements or for the development of alternatives.

8. Promote employment of women in industries with a small percentage of women and provide the needed skills, if necessary.

9. Take account of the employment perspectives for women and men in the process of structural change.

10. Promote development and structural change in rural areas with special emphasis on women.

11. Promote an attitudinal and behavioural change concerning the compatibility of domestic and employment responsibilities.

12. Develop a new social framework to enable men and women to combine domestic and employment responsibilities.

13. Develop new labour market systems to open up to individuals possibilities of remaining in employment and in career progression while performing family duties.

14. Create social infrastructures on a high level that ensure that women and men are equally able to take over socially necessary tasks while at the same time achieving good results in their career such as:

(a) Efficient transport services;

(b) Housing in proximity of the job;

(c) Comfortable shopping facilities;

(d) Convenient opening hours of these shops.

15. Shape the regional living-space so that women and men secure equitable living conditions such as:

(a) Family-friendly housing;

(b) Family-friendly urban environments.

16. Provide efficient child care throughout the day and throughout the year to enable parents to take their balanced share of working and family duties.

D. To eliminate all kinds of violations of women's human rights, and their causes, and to promote the role of women in achieving and maintaining peace:

1. Progress in dismantling gender-biased language use. Call upon the international community and the United Nations system to assist and participate in this process.

2. Protect human rights of foreigners, that is:

(a) Prohibit abuse of and violence against foreigners;

(b) Protect human rights of migrant workers.

3. Recognize gender-based persecution and mass rape as a basis for refugee and asylum status.

4. Grant residence permits to women irrespective of their marital status.

5. Prosecute those persons who commit systematic and gross violations of women's fundamental human rights, which means crimes against humanity. In order to ensure that those responsible for such abuses will be brought to justice, a permanent International Penal Court, with universal jurisdiction over war crimes and crimes against humanity, as well as gross and systematic violations of fundamental human rights, including gender-specific abuses such as rape, sexual slavery, forced sterilization, forced pregnancy and forced abortion, should be

established. Such a Court should have jurisdiction over crimes committed by United Nations personnel as well as by state officials and individuals.

6. Recognize that torture includes rape and other sex-specific forms of violence.

7. Eliminate violence against women:

(a) Prosecute female-genital mutilation;

(b) Prosecute marital rape;

(c) Prosecute sexual harassment;

(d) Prosecute trafficking in women;

(e) Prohibit show of violence against women on television, and in movies and videos.

8. Create shelter for battered and abused women and children.

9. Raise public awareness of violence against and abuse of children, and of neglect of children.

10. Make sure that children grow up in a safe family environment permitting the full and harmonious development of their personality:

(a) Give broader protection to families in all their forms;

(b) Improve the situation of single parents.

E. To promote actions to develop the common responsibility of women and men for achieving equality:

1. Raise awareness of this responsibility by:

(a) School education;

(b) Seminars;

(c) Public rallies;

(d) Articles in the printed media;

(e) Television and radio programmes.

2. Distribute honours and prizes for exemplary joint actions.

Bonn, 6 January 1994

National Council of German Women's Organizations (Deutscher Frauenrat)